

New sexual themes

Video games are revealing

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Custer's Revenge" at first glance seems to be just another video game, but the difference is, ah, revealing.

That difference is that "Custer's Revenge" and two other new video games about to reach the market — "Bachelor Party" and "Beat 'Em and Eat 'Em" — have blatantly sexual themes.

In "Custer's Revenge" Custer is wearing only boots and a hat and his intentions toward an Indian maiden are not those of an officer and a gentleman. The player earns points by coupling the male figure with the naked Indian maiden as many times as possible without being hit by an arrow.

"Our object is not to arouse, our object is to entertain," said Stuart Kesten, president of American Multiple Industries, which will market the games under the brand name of Mystique Retailing. "When people play our games, we want them smiling, we want them laughing."

Kesten said the games are not X-rated. That would

imply that the games are pornographic or sexually explicit, he said, while they are actually cartoonlike.

The video games, which are marked "Not for sale to minors," will retail for \$49.95 each, which is \$10 to \$15 more expensive than the costliest conventional video game. All are designed for use on the basic Atari video game system.

The games have been advertised in Playboy, Penthouse, and other magazines. The ad says, "When you score ... you score!"

"Bachelor Party" is similar to Atari's "Breakout," in which the player tries to keep a ball in play to knock down a wall. In this game, however, the player makes points by making contact with female characters.

The raciest game of the three is "Beat 'Em and Eat 'Em," which is difficult to describe with any degree of taste. However, it is similar to Activision's "Kaboom," in which the player attempts to catch falling objects.

The Mystique cassettes carry the Swedish Erotica insignia that is well known in the X-rated movie and video cassette trade. Kesten said the insignia was licensed

from the parent Cabellero Control Co. to help give the games credibility with video outlets accustomed to selling those cassettes. He said the warning not to sell to minors is simply an exercise of responsibility.

Kesten, a former marketing executive in the cosmetics industry, created American Multiple Industries about a year ago in partnership with Joel Martin, who is executive vice president. Martin has a background in toy manufacturing.

He said he hopes to have a total of 750,000 units of the three games on the market before Christmas.

Kesten said parents may wish to keep the games away from children, but added, "If the kids get hold of them, it'll be OK. There's nothing wrong. They're cartoonish, they're tongue-in-cheek adult situations that are not offensive — except to the player when he doesn't score enough points."

However, he suggested with "Beat 'Em and Eat 'Em" that "we should perhaps put a lock and key on. Even the title may not make it into certain stores."